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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 AMMAN 001803

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/24/2013

TAGS: [AEMR](#) [AMGT](#) [ASEC](#) [CASC](#) [CVIS](#) [IZ](#) [JO](#)

SUBJECT: TFIZO1: AMMAN SITREP 12 (3/26 0800 LOCAL)

REF: A. (A) FBIS GMP20030325000248

[1](#)B. (B) ABU DHABI 1384

[1](#)C. (C) FBIS GMP20030325000316

[1](#)D. (D) FBIS GMP20030325000335

Classified By: Acting DCM Doug Silliman. Reason 1.5 (b,d).

General Overview

[1](#)1. (SBU) The Embassy continues on a normal schedule March 26. Consular services are open. Activities at the American Language Center and Peace Corps remain suspended. Movements for American staff remain restricted.

Consular Issues

[1](#)2. (U) No new issues.

GOJ Actions/Statements

[1](#)3. (U) On March 25 Iraqi Vice President Taha Yasin Ramadan accused the Government of Jordan of "stopping" the importation of oil from Iraq and thus depriving King Abdullah of his "reward" from the Iraqi regime (ref A). Ramadan attacked Jordan for expelling its "diplomats," and asked if Jordan had not turned into a "front for the US aggression."

[1](#)4. (U) Jordanian Minister of Industry and Trade Salah Basheer and Minister of Information Mohammed Adwan stated at a joint press conference March 25 that the GOJ and King Abdullah, had exhausted all possible means to avoid war and to come to a peaceful solution. Basheer said the flow of commodities to Iraq from Jordan is "normal" and denied the GOJ had "frozen" Iraqi assets in Jordanian banks. He also said the GOJ would allow the three expelled Iraqi diplomats to be replaced by new ones. As for the oil, Adwan said that the security issue posed by the "current circumstances" make it unsafe for Jordanian truckers to go into Iraq. He said the GOJ has yet to import oil from other countries, but that "brotherly Arab countries" had promised to meet Jordan's oil demand (ref B).

[1](#)5. (U) In a press conference on March 25, Jordanian Foreign Minister Marwan Muasher stated that "His Majesty King Abdullah II continues exerting efforts to stop war on Iraq." Commenting on the expulsion of five Iraqi diplomats, Muasher said that "the reasons were not an American dictate," adding that Jordan is "ready to receive new diplomats." On the subject of Jordanian trade with Iraq, Muasher said that the Oil For Food program was stopped due to the departure of UN officials from Iraq due to the war, and noted that Jordan is urging the UN to set up new measures by which the Oil for Food program can be resumed. (ref C)

[1](#)6. (U) Iraqi Foreign Minister Naji Sabri sent a letter to Jordanian Foreign Minister Marwan Muasher March 25, which was read by an announcer on Iraqi Satellite Television, noting his surprise at the expulsion of five Iraqi diplomats from Jordan. In the letter, Sabri states: "You know that the so-called charges against our embassy employees are pure lies and are groundless." He notes, in particular, that Jordanian "intelligence officials escorted First Secretary Adb-al-Razzaq Iyad Ahmad in an uncivilized manner from his house in Amman and beat him up," adding that "we have no idea about his whereabouts." Finally, he states: "This action is a blatant violation of pan-Arab values and neighborly relations between our two countries," and points out "we strongly denounce that these measures of yours come in implementation of a disgraceful wish." (ref D)

Security

[1](#)7. (U) No new issues.

Economic and Trade Developments

18. (U) No new issues.

Refugee/Humanitarian Issues

19. (U) No new issues.

Press

110. (U) No new issues.
GNEHM